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11-223/79

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 15253

ROME FOR FODAG
DEPT PASS ALSO TO AID/WE.O. 12065: RDS-4 11/12/91 (KING, B.) OR-M
TAGS: SREF, EAID, UNHCR, WFP, PK, AF, PINT
SUBJECT: (U) AFGHAN REFUGEE RELIEF UPDATEREF: (A) ISLAMABAD 10183 (B) ISLAMABAD A-67
1. (C) SUMMARY: THE INTERNATIONAL AFGHAN REFUGEE RELIEF
EFFORT CONTINUES TO COPE WITH MOST OF THE PROBLEMS
CREATED BY THE PRESENCE OF SOME TWO MILLION REFUGEES
IN PAKISTAN. IN ITS FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION, THE UNHCR-
SPONSORED AND GOP-IMPLEMENTED REORGANIZATION OF RELIEF
ADMINISTRATION IS FUNCTIONING ADEQUATELY IN MOST OF THE
REFUGEE AREAS. STARVATION, EPIDEMICS AND LARGE-SCALE
DISRUPTIONS OF PUBLIC ORDER HAVE, SO FAR, BEEN AVOIDED,
AND THE MOST ESSENTIAL NEEDS OF A MAJORITY OF THE
REFUGEES SATISFIED. A "RE-ENUMERATION" OF THE REFUGEE
POPULATION, DUE FOR COMPLETION THIS MONTH, PROMISES
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TO ELIMINATE SOME OF THE DISTORTION IN REFUGEE

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REGISTRATION DATA AND PROVIDE GOP AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WITH A SOMEWHAT MORE ACCURATE RECORD OF THE EXISTING REFUGEE POPULATION AND CONTINUING INFLUX OF AFGHANS.

2. (C) DIFFICULTIES EXIST WITH THE RELIEF PROGRAM IN BOTH NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP) AND BALUCHISTAN, BUT APPEAR MORE PRONOUNCED IN THE LATTER PROVINCE. IN NWFP, WHERE ABOUT EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE REFUGEES RESIDE, THE PROGRAM WORKS ABOUT AS WELL AS COULD BE EXPECTED GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE. ITS COUNTERPART IN BALUCHISTAN APPEARS IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF LOGISTICAL DIFFICULTIES, COMMODITY SHORTAGES, INSUFFICIENT STAFFING, INEFFECTIVE MONITORING BY WFP, ETHNIC RIVALRIES, AND UNAUTHORIZED DIVERSIONS OF RELIEF GOODS. EMBASSY INTENDS TO RAISE THESE SHORTCOMINGS WITH APPROPRIATE RELIEF OFFICIALS IN AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE REMEDIAL ACTION.
END SUMMARY.

3. (C) HOW MANY REFUGEES?: MOST RECENT GOP REFUGEE REGISTRATION FIGURES SHOW OVER 2.4 MILLION AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN, BUT THIS FIGURE IS ONLY AN APPROXIMATION OF THE TOTAL SIZE OF THE REFUGEE POPULATION. AS DISCUSSED IN PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTS, SEVERAL FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO REGISTRATION DATA INFLATION: E.G., EXAGGERATED CLAIMS OF FAMILY AND TRIBAL SIZE BY REFUGEE LEADERS, CORRUPT RELIEF OFFICIALS, AND DELIBERATE REGISTRATION OF PAKISTANI VILLAGERS AS REFUGEES IN ORDER TO LIMIT THE DISORIENTMENT OF LOCAL POPULATION. THE PRACTICE OF SECLUDING WOMEN (PURDAH), THE REFUGEES' MOBILITY AND SEASONAL MIGRATIONS, AND POLITICAL

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CONCERNS CONTINUED AROUND SUPPORT FOR THE ANTI-SOVIET INSURGENT IN AFGHANISTAN AND PRESERVING PUBLIC ORDER IN PAKISTAN HAVE LIMITED THE GOP'S READINESS AND ABILITY TO VERIFY REFUGEE REGISTRATION DATA.

4. (C) ADVERSE PUBLICITY AND PRESSURE FROM DONORS, NEVERTHELESS, LED THE GOP TO BEGIN A MASSIVE RECOUNT IN THE SUMMER OF 1981, USING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND OTHER CENSUS-TAKERS, AMONG THEM WOMEN. THOUGH THE RESULTS OF THE CENSUS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, EMBASSY

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HAS LEARNED FROM SOURCES IN THE RELIEF EFFORT THAT A TWENTY TO THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT REDUCTION IN REGISTRATION FIGURES HAS OCCURED IN SOME CAMP AREAS. THE REMOTE AND IMPOVERISHED CHAGAI DISTRICT (BALUCHISTAN), FOR EXAMPLE, SHOWED 123,000 AFGHAN REFUGEES IN ITS NINE CAMPS PRIOR TO THE RECOUNT;

Blat?

NEW DATA SHOW FEWER THAN 90,000. THE CENSUS ALSO ELIMINATED 16,000 REFUGEES FROM THE ROLLS OF KURRAM AGENCY (NWFP). THE NEW FIGURES, HOWEVER, DO NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED DURING THE RECOUNT OR THOSE AWAY FROM THE CAMPS CONDUCTING JIHAD AGAINST THE SOVIETS IN AFGHANISTAN, TENDING DISTANT ANIMAL HERDS, WORKING OUTSIDE OF THE CAMPS, AND ON TRADITIONAL WINTER/SUMMER MIGRATIONS.

5. (C) THE "RE-ENUMERATION" HAS BEEN NO MEAN FEAT. MANY REFUGEE LEADERS RESISTED THE CENSUS, AND IN ONE AREA VISITED, MUSLIMBAGH (FORMERLY HINDUBAGH, BALUCHISTAN), RESISTANCE TOOK THE FORM OF VIOLENCE IN WHICH A PAK VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR WAS BEATEN AND THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER QUELLED THE DISTURBANCE WITH A SHOW-OF-FORCE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 15253

ROME FOR FODAG
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BY THE MILITIA. IN ANOTHER INSTANCE IN BALUCHISTAN,
UNHCR/PAKISTAN CHIEF-OF-MISSION KOHAUT PERSONALLY
REQUESTED RESTIVE REFUGEES TO COOPERATE WITH THE CENSUS
TAKERS. DELIVERIES OF RELIEF COMMODITIES IN MANY CAMPS
WERE SUSPENDED PENDING COMPLETION OF THE RECOUNT.
SOME LOW-LEVEL OFFICIALS APPEARED ILL-DISPOSED TOWARDS
THE RECOUNT BECAUSE OF FEARS OF REFUGEE VIOLENCE
DIRECTED AGAINST THEM.

CLAIMING THAT REGISTRATION INFLATION WAS AT MOST TEN
PERCENT AND A RECOUNT WAS NOT WORTH THE ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL COSTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OFFICIALS IN
BALUCHISTAN APPEARED TO WELCOME A RECOUNT, WHICH THEY
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BELIEVED, WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO LOCAL BALUCHI TRIBESMEN
THAT THE PREDOMINANTLY PATHAN REFUGEES IN BALUCHISTAN

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WERE FEWER THAN ORIGINALLY THOUGHT.

6. (C) EMBASSY COMMENT: THE RECOUNT IS EXPECTED TO SHOW A DECLINE IN THE NUMBERS OF REGISTERED REFUGEES, BUT AS REPORTED IN OTHER MESSAGES, SOME GOP OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US PRIVATELY NOT TO EXPECT TOO DRAMATIC A DECLINE IN THE REFUGEE DATA.

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 / END OF COMMENT.

7. (LOU) COMMODITIES, COMMUNICATIONS, CORRUPTION: NONE OF THE AREAS VISITED IN A RECENT TWO-WEEK TOUR OF NWFP AND BALUCHISTAN, REPORTED RECEIVING ALL OF THE AUTHORIZED RELIEF ITEMS ON A MONTHLY BASIS, ALTHOUGH WHEAT AND TO A LESSER DEGREE SUGAR HAVE BEEN DELIVERED MORE OR LESS REGULARLY. TENTS, EDIBLE OIL, DSM, AND COOKING AND HEATING FUEL WERE ALMOST EVERYWHERE IN SHORT SUPPLY. SOME CAMPS AND WAREHOUSES REPORTED GAPS OF SEVERAL MONTHS BETWEEN DELIVERIES OF GOODS. AS WINTER APPROACHES, TENTS APPEAR AS A PARTICULARLY PRESSING NEED WITH MANY TENTS CURRENTLY IN USE REQUIRING EARLY REPLACEMENT. A VARIETY OF POLITICAL AND CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF THE REFUGEE INFLUX SOME TWO YEARS AGO, PROVIDED TENTS WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR CONDITION AND QUALITY. THE QUALITY OF THE TENTS REMAINS UNEVEN. "CROWN AGENTS", ACTING ON BEHALF OF UNHCR, RECENTLY REJECTED A BATCH OF 1,000 TENTS FOR BALUCHISTAN FOR FAILING TO MEET UNHCR SPECIFICATIONS. IN BANNU (NWFP) THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR HAD NEARLY 500 TENTS UNDISTRIBUTED IN HIS WAREHOUSE

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BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY IN SELECTING THE MOST NEEDY OUT OF THOUSANDS OF NEEDY FAMILIES REQUIRING SHELTER. UNHCR AND OTHER RELIEF AGENCIES ARE REPORTEDLY OBTAINING AND DISTRIBUTING AN ADDITIONAL 50,000 TENTS TO ACCOMMODATE REFUGEE REQUIREMENTS. SOME REFUGEES ALLEGEDLY SELL THEIR UNHCR-SPECIFICATION TENTS TO PURCHASE CHEAPER AND LESS-DURABLE ONES ON THE LOCAL MARKET -- RELIEF OFFICIALS HAVE CLAIMED THAT THESE REFUGEES WILL NOT BE ISSUED NEW TENTS.

8. (C) THE HOUSING SITUATION IS COMPLICATED BY AMBIGUOUS GOP AND PROVINCIAL POLICIES TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION

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BY REFUGEES OF SEMI-PERMANENT KETCHA (MUD) OR STONE HOUSES. IN MOST OF THE NWFP, AUTHORITIES DISCOURAGE THE BUILDING OF KETCHA HOUSES IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT THE FURTHER SPREAD OF PERMANENT-LOOKING "MUD VILLAGES", SUCH AS THOSE NOW SURROUNDING PESHAWAR, BUT IN SOME PARTS OF NWFP OFFICIALS PERMIT THESE CONSTRUCTIONS AS LONG AS LOCAL RESIDENTS DO NOT OBJECT. IN BALUCHISTAN, WHERE THE REFUGEES ARE KEPT AT CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM LOCAL POPULATION CENTERS, AUTHORITIES, WITH UNHCR BACKING IN THE FORM OF ROOFING MATERIALS, ENCOURAGE THESE CONSTRUCTIONS AS A MEANS OF REDUCING DEPENDENCE ON TENTS AND HEATING FUEL. CONSTRUCTION OF KETCHA HUTS IN SOME AREAS OF BALUCHISTAN IS LIMITED BY A LACK OF WATER.

9. (LOU) AS STATED PREVIOUSLY, WHEAT AND SUGAR, BOTH DRAWN FROM GOP STOCKS AND LATER REPLACED BY THE WFP, REACH THE REFUGEES ON A FAIRLY ROUTINE BASIS, THOUGH SOME REFUGEES COMPLAIN OF NOT RECEIVING THE FULL AUTHORIZED RATION. EDIBLE OIL AND DSM REPORTEDLY REACH FEW REFUGEES REGULARLY, AND WFP SUPPLIES ARE INSUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE REFUGEES. APPARENTLY ERRATIC DONOR SHIPMENTS OF EDIBLE OIL AND DSM LEAD TO

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A "FEAST OR FAMINE" SITUATION, AND THE PROBLEM IS COMPLICATED BY SEVERE TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS. OIL AND DSM IS SHIPPED VIA PAKISTAN'S ANTIQUATED AND OVER-WORKED RAILROADS FROM POE KARACHI TO PESHAWAR OR QUETTA AND THEN TRANSPORTED TO REGIONAL STOREHOUSES. DISTRIBUTION TO THE WIDELY SCATTERED REFUGEES, ESPECIALLY IN BALUCHISTAN, IS HAMPERED BY A LACK OF TRUCKS, UNRELIABLE TRUCK CONTRACTORS, POOR ROADS, LONG DISTANCES BETWEEN CAMPS, ROUGH HANDLING, POOR STORAGE PRACTICES, THEFT, ETHNIC RIVALRIES AMONG REFUGEES AND BETWEEN ADMINISTRATORS AND REFUGEES. TO COMPOUND THE PROBLEM, THE PATHAN TRIBAL STRUCTURE INTERFERES WITH THE EFFORTS TO PROVIDE RELIEF ITEMS DIRECTLY TO THE REFUGEES, AND ONLY RECENTLY HAS THE GOP MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN CIRCUMVENTING THE REFUGEE LEADERS AND DISTRIBUTING RELIEF ITEMS DIRECTLY TO HEADS-OF-FAMILY.

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10. (C) INADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF HEATING AND COOKING FUEL

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ARE A MAJOR CONCERN, AND THE PRESSURE ON PAKISTAN'S LIMITED FOREST RESOURCES CONTINUES TO GROW AS WINTER APPROACHES. DISTRIBUTION OF KEROSENE STOVES HAS BEGUN BUT DISTRIBUTION OF KEROSENE LAGS FAR BEHIND. ONE CAMP VISITED IN BALUCHISTAN RECEIVED A KEROSENE HOLDING TANK OVER ONE YEAR AGO, BUT HAD YET TO RECEIVE ANY KEROSENE. RELIEF OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD FEW TANKER TRUCKS AT THEIR DISPOSAL, THAT KEROSENE SUPPLIES WERE SHORT, AND THAT GOP WAS DEPENDENT ON DONATIONS FROM GULF NATIONS. DESPITE THESE PROBLEMS, NWFP REFUGEE COMMISSIONER ABDULLAH HAS INSISTED THAT ALL REFUGEES BE PROVIDED WITH STOVES. UNHCR HAS PROPOSED A MORE LIMITED DISTRIBUTION.

11. (LOU) LOSSES OF U.S.-DONATED VEGOIL AND DSM DUE TO PACKAGING PROBLEMS WERE ROUGHLY ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN 3 TO 5 PERCENT. IN STOREHOUSES VISITED, OIL-STAINED CASES OF VEGOIL HAD BEEN PUT ASIDE AS "DAMAGED" ALTHOUGH MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF THE TINS INSIDE WERE NOT LEAKING. SOME DAMAGE HAD BEEN CAUSED BY VERY ROUGH HANDLING AND HAPHAZARD STACKING -- NUMBERS OF CASES STACKED UPSIDE DOWN TO HEIGHTS OF 15 TO 20 FEET. SEVERAL LARGE BAGS OF EEC-DONATED DSM IN ONE BALUCHISTAN "BINI-SHELL" WAREHOUSE HAD BURST OPEN UNDER HARSH TREATMENT. NO SIMILAR LOSSES IN U.S.-DONATED DSM, PACKED IN SMALL BAGS INSIDE CARTONS, WAS OBSERVED OR REPORTED.

12. (C) ALLEGEDLY, LOSSES DUE TO DIVERSION WERE GREATER THAN WE HAD PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT. ONE USAID EMPLOYEE AND LONG-TIME RESIDENT OF BALUCHISTAN CLAIMED THAT A
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SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE COMMODITIES EARMARKED FOR BALUCHISTAN DID NOT REACH INTENDED RECIPIENTS. PILFERAGE OCCURS AT POE KARACHI, RAIL DEPOT IN QUETTA, PROVINCIAL WAREHOUSES AND AT THE CAMP LEVEL

SOME
OF THIS MONEY IS REPORTEDLY USED TO SUPPORT THE REFUGEES AND THE JIHAD, AND THE VOLUME OF COMMODITIES SLIPPED ACROSS THE BORDER INTO AFGHANISTAN TO FEED STAY-AT-HOME RELATIVES AND TRIBESHEN AND TO SUPPORT THE ANTI-SOVIET FREEDOM FIGHTERS IS THOUGHT TO BE CONSIDERABLE IN

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BOTH PROVINCES.

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13. (LOU) MOST CAMPS VISITED REPORTED INSUFFICIENT MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND PERSONNEL -- PROBLEMS ALSO COMMON TO MOST PAKISTANI HOSPITALS AND TO WHICH, IRONICALLY, THE RELIEF EFFORT CONTRIBUTES BY OFFERING HIGHER SALARIES THAN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS THEREBY DRAWING AWAY TRAINED MEDICAL PERSONNEL. ACCORDING TO CAMP RECORDS, MALARIA, TB, GASTRO-INTESTINAL AND SKIN AND EYE DISORDERS ARE COMMON AMONG REFUGEES. THE ICRC HOSPITAL IN PESHAWAR WAS DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB OF TREATING BADLY WOUNDED AFGHANS, INCLUDING SEVERAL SMALL CHILDREN INJURED BY BULLETS AND EXPLOSIVES.

14. (C) WHO'S WATCHING? THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE REFUGEE RELIEF EFFORT LAUNCHED IN JANUARY 1981, CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF AN ORGANIZATION EMPLOYING APPROXIMATELY 6,000 PERSONS. IN NWFP, THE REFUGEE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE CLAIMED THAT 85 PERCENT OF THE POSITIONS SANCTIONED BY THE GOP HAD BEEN FILLED. IN BALUCHISTAN, SOME 60 PERCENT OF THE AUTHORIZED POSTS HAD BEEN OCCUPIED AND

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IN REMOTE AREAS SUCH AS CHAGAI, LESS THAN 50 PERCENT.
THE MID- AND SENIOR-LEVEL POSITIONS ARE FILLED BY
RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS OR SECONDED CIVIL SERVANTS.
NEW LOW-LEVEL EMPLOYEES HAVE LITTLE IF ANY PRACTICAL
WORK EXPERIENCE. SALARIES AT THE LOWER LEVELS ARE POOR
AND NOT PROMPTLY PAID. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE QUALITY
AND DEDICATION OF THE STAFF IS OFTEN TIMES LESS THAN
DESIRED. THE GOP, TO ITS CREDIT, HAS IN SOME CASES
TAKEN LEGAL ACTION AGAINST OFFICIALS SUSPECTED OF
CORRUPT PRACTICES.

15. (C) UNTIL OCTOBER 23, 1981, BALUCHISTAN HAD NO
REFUGEE COMMISSIONER. REFUGEE MATTERS WERE IN THE HANDS
OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR QUETTA DIVISION, A TOUGH NO-
NONSENSE LAW-AND-ORDER MAN WHO MADE NO SECRET OF HIS
DISDAIN FOR THE REFUGEES AND FOR "DO-GOODER" FOREIGNERS.
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REFUGEE RELIEF WAS SECONDARY TO CONCERNS ABOUT PUBLIC
ORDER AND LOCAL RESENTMENT OF THE REFUGEES. THE NEW

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REFUGEE COMMISSIONER IS A RETIRED ARMY COLONEL AND A CAREER CIVIL SERVANT WITH EXPERIENCE IN BALUCHISTAN. MOST OBSERVERS APPEARED TO BELIEVE THAT HIS APPOINTMENT WILL BENEFIT THE PROGRAM IN BALUCHISTAN.

16. (C) UNHCR AND WFP HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY ATTRACTING SUITABLE EMPLOYEES. ACCORDING TO UNHCR AND WFP OFFICIALS IN PAKISTAN, SALARIES, WORKING CONDITIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR CAREER ENHANCEMENT ARE POOR. EXPERIENCED STAFFERS ARE RELUCTANT TO FILL MANY OF THE POSITIONS OFFERED, ESPECIALLY IN BALUCHISTAN. UNHCR REPS, INCLUDING HIGH COMMISSIONER HARTLING, HAVE NOTED REPEATEDLY THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REORGANIZATION PLAN AND RELIEF-RELATED SCHEMES BY THE GOP HAS GONE SLOWER THAN HOPED; THEY POINT OUT THAT LARGE SUMS OF MONEY REMAIN UNEXPENDED EVEN AS 1981 DRAWS TO A CLOSE. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNHCR PROGRAM IS HAMPERED BY THE BUREAUCRATIC INERTIA OF THE GOP AND BY THE USE OF DIFFERENT DONOR AND GOP FISCAL AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES.

17. (C) EMBASSY COMMENT: BECAUSE OF THESE AND OTHER PROBLEMS, UNHCR INCREASINGLY RELIES UPON VOLAGS TO TAKE ON MORE OF THE WORKLOAD. THE VOLAGS ARE SMALLER, OPERATIONAL AND SEEMINGLY MORE FLEXIBLE. EMBASSY FULLY SUPPORTS RP EFFORTS TO CHANNEL USG FUNDS TO THE VOLAGS WITH VIABLE FIELD PROGRAMS. END COMMENT.

18. (C) LAW AND ORDER: IN GENERAL, RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL RESIDENTS AND REFUGEES APPEAR TOLERABLE. LARGE-SCALE CLASHES BETWEEN PAKS AND AFGHANS OVER FOOD, WATER, FUEL AND GRAZING LANDS FOR ANIMAL HERDS HAVE NOT, SO FAR, CONFIDENTIAL
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OCCURED AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES HAVE QUICKLY RESPONDED TO ANY SUCH POSSIBILITIES. IN NWFP, DESPITE THE ENORMOUS REFUGEE POPULATION, VIOLENCE HAS REMAINED AT A MINIMUM BECAUSE OF STRONG LINGUISTIC, RELIGIOUS, AND ETHNIC TIES AND BECAUSE OF GOP WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW LOCALS TO BENEFIT FROM CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE REFUGEE PROGRAM SUCH AS MEDICAL AND WATER SCHEMES AND PAYMENT OF CASH ALLOWANCES. IN BALUCHISTAN, MOST OF THE REFUGEES ARE ETHNIC PATHANS, WHILE AT LEAST HALF OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE BALUCHI. AUTHORITIES HAVE CAREFULLY KEPT REFUGEE VILLAGES AT CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM

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MOST POPULATION CENTERS, DESPITE THE ADDITIONAL LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS THIS PRESENTS THE RELIEF EFFORT. QUETTA, UNLIKE PESHAWAR, IS NOT HEMMED IN BY VAST REFUGEE VILLAGES. IN ONE AREA (CHAGAI), THERE ARE LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES WHO ARE BALUCHI WHO FEEL DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY THE PUNJABI AND PATHAN OFFICIALS WHO COMPOSE THE MIDDLE AND SENIOR LEVELS OF THE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION. THOUGH THIS RESENTMENT HAS NOT DEVELOPED INTO VIOLENCE, TROUBLE REMAINS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY.

19. (C) CONCLUSIONS: AS NOTED ABOVE, THE RELIEF EFFORT CONFRONTS A NUMBER OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS. FROM WHAT WE CAN ASCERTAIN, FEW REFUGEES RECEIVE THEIR FULL AUTHORIZED MONTHLY RATION AND CASH ALLOWANCE. ASIDE FROM WHEAT, AND TO A LESSER DEGREE SUGAR, NONE OF THE RELIEF ITEMS HAS BEEN DELIVERED ON A REGULAR BASIS. DIVERSION OF RELIEF GOODS AND OF THE GOP-FUNDED CASH ALLOWANCE IS A PROBLEM AND IN MANY AREAS THE GOP HAS COMPLETELY SUSPENDED PAYMENTS. WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, REMEMBER THAT CERTAIN "DIVERSIONS" APPEAR TO SERVE BROADER INTERESTS: THEY HELP BUY DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY IN PAKISTAN AND SUPPORT THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN AFGHANISTAN.

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20. (C). THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF STARVATION, MALNUTRITION OR EPIDEMICS AMONG THE REFUGEES RESIDENT IN THE CAMPS. THE TOUGHNESS OF THE AFGHANS, THE STILL SURPRISINGLY WARM WELCOME ACCORDED THE REFUGEES BY PAKISTANI PUBLIC, AND THE RELATIVE GENEROSITY OF THE CALLED-FOR REFUGEE RATIONS -- WHICH MAKE NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CALORIC REQUIREMENTS OF AN ADULT AND THOSE OF A NEW-BORN -- PROVIDE THE RELIEF EFFORT WITH FLEXIBILITY; TEMPORARY GAPS IN DELIVERIES DO NOT, THEREFORE, HAVE AN OVERLY NEGATIVE IMPACT UPON THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE REFUGEES. EVEN IN THOSE AREAS WHERE UNHCR, WFP AND GGP HAVE SUSPENDED RELIEF ENTIRELY -- SUCH AS IN THE CHAMAN BORDER AREA OF BALUCHISTAN, IN AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE REFUGEES TO MOVE TO LESS SENSITIVE AREAS -- THE REFUGEES HAVE IN MANY CASES REFUSED TO MOVE AND DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE SUFFERED GREATLY. ADMITTEDLY,
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PROLONGED DELAYS IN OR A SUSPENSION OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE APPROXIMATELY TWO MILLION REFUGEES WOULD

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CAUSE SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DISLOCATIONS WITHIN PAKISTAN AND DAMAGE WESTERN INTERESTS.

21. (C) IN AN EFFORT TO MINIMIZE CORRUPTION, THE U.S. SHOULD ENCOURAGE UNHCR AND WFP TO IMPROVE THEIR STAFFING AND MONITORING ACTIVITIES. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE DECISION TO FUNNEL MOST U.S. AID FOR REFUGEES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IS CORRECT AND THAT WE MUST RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO ADOPT AN OPERATIONAL STANCE IN THE RELIEF EFFORT. TO DO SO WOULD ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO SEE THE AFGHAN PROBLEM AS ESSENTIALLY AN AMERICAN INSPIRED ISSUE AND WOULD NOT, IN OUR VIEW, PROVIDE US WITH MORE LEVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE RELIEF EFFORT. IN FACT, A HIGHER U.S. PROFILE WOULD, WE BELIEVE, DAMAGE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE AS AN INDIGENOUS FREEDOM STRUGGLE AND COMPROMISE THE CURRENTLY INDEPENDENT POSITION OF AMERICAN AFFILIATED VOLAGS.

22. (C) IN CONCLUSION, WE BELIEVE THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN THE RELIEF PROGRAM ARISE FROM TWO BASIC FACTS: (1) PAKISTAN IS A POOR COUNTRY WITH LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES, INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE, AND A SHORTAGE OF TRAINED ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER PERSONNEL ATTEMPTING TO DEAL WITH A PROBLEM OF MANY DIMENSIONS AND OF INDEFINITE DURATION, AND (2) THE AFGHANS ARE NOT "TYPICAL" REFUGEES. THEY ARE INDEPENDENT, ASSERTIVE, AND GENERALLY WELL-ARMED AND THEY ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO DEFEND WHAT THEY SEE AS THEIR RIGHTS AND TRADITIONS. DEALING WITH THESE REFUGEES IS A QUESTION OF COMPLEX NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EQUALS AND NEITHER THE GOP NOR ANYONE ELSE CAN
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